

Musicians/Singers bios

AndreYAH Black



Queen AndreYAH is a voice of heaven. Her name represents her royalty as a woman of God. It gives honor to the name of God, YAHWEH/(YHWH) the Hebrew tetragrammaton. This songstress and songwriter blends gospel, R&B and Jazz into angelic yet exceptionally powerful songs. Through her music she worships and sings of love, including her own life experiences.

Queen AndreYAH is born and raised in Stamford, Connecticut and currently based in New York City. She says, "My great-great grandfather George D. Hernandez, a tenor, sang light opera, jazz and spiritual songs worldwide. My late mother came from 8 generations of ministers, she exclaimed that I came out of the womb singing. I sang incessantly around the house. When my mother discovered my voice she said it was beautiful and sent me to study opera on weekends at age 11. My father, Gilbert Hernandez Black, a retired Negro League baseball player, was the sole proprietor of Black Records, a mom and pop record shop in Norwalk, Connecticut. As a child, my sisters Cheryl, Monique and I took part in dancing like Soul Train dancers in the windows of the shop. My father said we attracted many customers who purchased records. I've listened to all genres of music all my life, this has given me a musical understanding I am very grateful for."

Queen AndreYAH's music has also been featured on USA and Russian radio, Piccolo and M.O.J.A Festivals in Charleston, SC and the White Dog Festival in Belorussia. She has produced concerts and one-woman shows in jazz venues on Broadway and off-off Broadway. She got her start years ago at Jazz Cultural Theater in New York City, where Barry Harris was a partner. She has also showed her work at Club La Mama Theater, The Metropolitan Room, Triad Theater and other venues off-Broadway.

Queen AndreYAH Black's self-titled EP broadcasts her distinctive sound and exquisite musicality. She blissfully merges sweetness and command into cover and original songs like "Gem of A Man" and her rendition of "Blessed Assurance". This EP is bound to leave its mark in the gospel, jazz and R&B scene, as will the virtuous woman herself, Queen AndreYAH Black.

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5th Annual Marble Summer Arts Festival
June 13 – 18, 2021

Chris Chalfant



Chris Chalfant is a composer, pianist, vocalist, poet, and visual artist. Studies include a BA in Music with a focus in piano at Kent State with Margaret Baxtresser, Eurhythmics at Longy School of Music with Anne Farber, Jazz with Connie Crothers and an MM from New England Conservatory, with a focus on jazz, composition, non-western and aleatoric music. Her mentor was George Russell.

Recordings as producer, composer and pianist include “Book of Unstandards,” “Love and Light,” “Convergence” with Noah Howard Quartet, “New’d Music” with Dennis Warren and, “All in Good Time” with the Chris Chalfant Trio. The multimedia piece “Looking Through Trees” was premiered at Irondale Theatre in Brooklyn, NY in 2010. Prior incarnations of LTT included a painted paper sculpture, a trio improvisation at Chelsea Museum and a film with live improvisation ensemble at University of Denver. Chalfant co-led the Dojo Band and Lifetime Visions Orchestra with Joseph Jarman which featured her works frequently.

Chris Chalfant’s work has been featured in Nancy Jazz Pulsations and Vision Festivals, Prague Jazzového Mezinárodní Piana, on Czech National Radio, at International Society of Improvised Music (ISIM) Conferences, the Leukerbad (Switzerland) International Composers Conference and in residencies at Atlantic Center with Joan LaBarbara and Morton Subotnick, Bard College of Music Jazz program, and Music Omi International. Collections of original compositions include *Book of Unstandards* and *First Performances*. Other works may be found in *Notations 21* by Theresa Sauer, *Silent Solos Improvisers Speak*, (Buddy’s Knife,) “Encyclopedia of the 21st Century,” (Maximillien de Lafayette, editor) and *Jazz Improv Magazine*.

Chalfant studied art and music in Akron, Ohio where she was presented in a city-wide art show at age 14 and where she co-curated an interactive art exhibit at age 16 with the Akron Art Institute (now Museum.) Chalfant won second place for two compositions in a city-wide competition. After moving to the East Coast, Chris Chalfant delved into multi-genre collaborations with artists, dancers and poets. In 1990 Chris Chalfant was the merit finalist for “A Portrait of Three Portraits” in a national competition out of Louisville, Kentucky.

While her visual art took a back seat to music for years, Chris Chalfant got back into visual art through photography. Her most recent nature photography has been the result of the need to connect to the ongoing unfolding of life during the time of Covid. Chalfant’s work has been shown numerous times at Marble Collegiate Church and at Blue Door Art Center where she won Best of Show for “Red Rose.”

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Karl Dion Dixon



Karl Dixon starred in “The Ray of Light”, a musical tribute to Ray Charles. He has performed at venues such as Resorts International in Atlantic City and Mohegan Sun in Connecticut. He has toured the world as a soloist with the Harlem Jubilee Singers appearing in Italy and France among others. He has had performances such as “Sportin’ Life” in excerpts from Porgy and Bess at Teatro Municipal in Rio De Janeiro; Festival Cervantino in Mexico; The Casa De Musica Sociedad Filarmonica, in Quito, Ecuador and Columbia.

Karl has toured extensively throughout Brazil with the Uptown Brazilian Blues band. He has been a soloist with the Marble Collegiate Gospel Choir for nearly 20 years and is featured on, “How Sweet the Sound”; toured South

Africa and appeared in the documentary film “UMOJA, Moments of Grace”.

Karl works as a Dental Hygienist and is also a Professor of Dental Anatomy and Clinical Dental Hygiene at New York University’s College of Dentistry.

His single, a remake of Eric Clapton and B.B. King’s “Riding with the King” is available on iTunes and Spotify.

Cilla Owens



Cilla Owens has been called “*as smooth as Nancy Wilson, as authoritative as Sarah Vaughan, and as informed as Carmen McRae*” (JazzTimes). Her credits include performances at Lincoln Center, the Blue Note, Symphony Space, Carnegie Hall, NJPAC, the Cornelia Street Café, and the Iridium. She has performed in Germany and the Caribbean, as well as in the Annual Festival of Jewish Music in Krakow, Poland, and the Blues to Bop Festival in Lugano, Switzerland, both as part of saxophonist Paul Shapiro’s *Ribs and Brisket Revue*. She is the director of the Adelphi University Jazz Ensemble, coaches the Hunter College Jazz/Pop Combo #2, and teaches private voice on both campuses. Cilla can be heard on the *Ribs and Brisket*

Revue’s Essen, and on her CD *Tis What It Is*.

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Antoinetta Silicato



Antoinetta Silicato is a singer/performer who, for more than three decades, resided in New York City and worked in Jazz Ensembles, Negro Spiritual Choirs, Gospel Choirs and Musical Theatre. As a solo artist, she has smartly amassed these musically rich experiences into a swinging style that sparkles with excitement. As a balladeer, her storytelling renders lyrics and melodies that are deeply visceral, defining her as a timeless jazz song stylist/chanteuse. Crediting her earliest influences, Silicato reaches back to her home town of Wilmington Delaware, where she acted in both leading and supporting roles at The Candle Light Theatre, Arden Gild, and the Wilmington Drama

League. It was Silicato's participation in a summer theatre workshop at the Hedgerow Theatre in Media, Pennsylvania that ignited her curiosity and creative energies forward, towards her artistic endeavors.

From 2007-2010 Silicato lived in Taormina, Sicily. During this period, she honed another passion, the Sicilian Mediterranean style of cooking. Carefully collecting chosen recipes, in Sicily, she released a cookbook entitled "SOULFUL SICILIAN COOKING" through Legas Publishing, in 2012. It was then when Silicato also made her debut at the Metropolitan Room, NYC, while on a book tour.

Now, back on the east coast, Silicato debuted a new show, "I'll Take Manhattan" at the Triad Theater in NYC, on September 28, 2019 to a full house. This date marks her first time gracing a NYC stage, since 2012; a resurgence to her singing career. Working behind the scenes, Silicato is creating and developing a concept show that will pay tribute to two legendary singers. Silicato, covering songs from a CD recorded by one of the singers giving tribute to the other, promises to be a sensation. Both singers (artists names will be revealed closer to its premiere) are no longer with us.

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Julia Breanetta Simpson



Julia Breanetta Simpson is an actress and singer who has appeared around the country at Regional, Dinner and Stock Theatres and Festivals in such productions as Memories of the Game, Ain't Misbehavin', Dreamgirls, For Colored Girls, One Mo' Time, Purlie, Tintypes, and When The Nightingale Sings. She has appeared in various Off-Broadway Theatres and Cabaret venues in New York City. Julia can be seen throughout the Tri-State area performing her one-woman shows, concerts and various acting projects. Julia earned her BFA degree in Musical Theatre at Syracuse University. She is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association where she served on the Council for 23 years and SAG-AFTRA. Julia is the Founder and Artistic Director of Breanetta Productions which she created to honor and celebrate contributions made to society and world culture by African

Americans. Julia has released two CDs "Classy & Sassy: A Lena Horne Tribute" and "Here's To Life!" which can be found at cdbaby.com, iTunes, Amazon and Napster.

Yvonne Winfrey



From an internship at NBC's Saturday Night Live that introduced her to live production with bands like Nirvana, Bruce Springsteen and the Red Hot Chili Peppers, to a tour that took her through 43 states in four years, Yvonne Winfrey has always had a passion for music, theatre, and production. Simultaneously, through the years, she has recorded music and toured with rock bands, including her own band Submission Red (Dream/Universal Records). Submission Red had success hitting the Billboard Christian charts five times as an independent artist, five releases that were spinning on over 35 stations around the country and

three In Canada. The band also had the privilege of receiving a local Grammy Nomination from the Florida Chapter at The Recording Academy for their song "Drive On."

The band spread their high energy show and love for God at venues all over the country from youth and church groups to New York City's Kenny's Castaways to LA's Viper Room. She has also shared her artistic and production skills with her elementary, middle, high school and college students --including the New York City Department of Education and Tisch Undergraduate Drama at New York University.

All this being said, Yvonne is not all about theatre and music, she has also dedicated many years to canvassing the country for support and speaking on behalf of foster care and adoption specifically out of foster care. Additionally, she fostered over 90 children, and from that experience, adopted her two wonderful sons, Bruce and Terrance.

Today, Yvonne is currently launching her own music label and publishing company, AttheBeatdown Productions, with compositions for commercials, web content, television, and film. (www.AttheBeatdown.com).